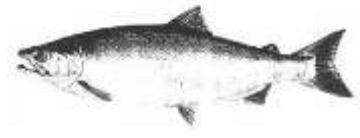


# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



## NEWS RELEASE

*Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner  
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### **Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #2**

**COPPER RIVER DISTRICT:** The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, May 20 for a 12-hour period. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be CLOSED during this period. The Miles Lake sonar project is currently operational on the north bank of the river. The south bank sonar has not yet been deployed due to low water and ice conditions. The cumulative sonar count to date is 0 fish whereas the anticipated count for this date is 471 fish. The preliminary harvest estimate from the 12-hour period that occurred on Thursday, May 16 was 700 Chinook and 82,000 sockeye salmon with an estimated 327 deliveries reported. This compares to an anticipated harvest of 36,000 sockeye and 1,800 Chinook salmon for this period.

Subsistence harvest may occur in the Copper River District concurrent with commercial periods until the Copper River District is closed at the end of the season. Subsistence permits may be obtained during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

#### **PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND:**

On May 15 at 8:00 am, districts in PWS outside of the Chenega and the Tatitlek Subsistence Areas (5AAC 01.648) were opened to subsistence harvest to the gear type specified in 5AAC 24.330(a), (b) and (c) until 2 days prior to the commercial opening of that district. Gear specifications are restricted to 50 fathom gillnets and 50 fathom seines as described in 5AAC 01.620(b)(3). The Tatitlek and Chenega Subsistence Areas described in 5AAC 01.648 will also open to subsistence harvest at 8:00 am on May 15. Legal gear types in the Tatitlek and Chenega Subsistence Areas are 150 fathom set or drift gillnets, 50 fathom seines and dipnets in freshwater for pink salmon. Commercial fishing districts within these subsistence areas will close to subsistence harvest 2 days prior to the commercial opening of that district and will reopen concurrent with commercial fishing periods until that district is closed at the end of the season. Subsistence users may obtain subsistence permits during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** The waters of Sawmill Bay, including the AFK Hatchery Terminal Harvest Area (THA) and Special Harvest Area (SHA), inside of the THA line from 60° 03.66' N. lat., 147° 59.11' W. long. to 60° 02.77' N. lat., 148° 01.00' W. long to 60° 02.76' N. lat., 148° 01.66' W. long. will open to purse seine fishing for 36-hours at 8:00 am on Saturday, June 1 with an additional 60-hour period beginning at 8:00 am on Monday, June 3. A regular schedule of two fishing periods per week is anticipated to remain in effect until further notice. Starting Monday, June 3, this schedule will consist of a 60-hour fishing period, from 8:00 a.m. Monday to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, and an 84-hour fishing period, from 8:00 a.m. Thursday to 8:00 p.m. Sunday. Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice. A total of 306,000 remote release chum salmon are forecast to return to the Armin F. Koernig (AFK) Hatchery. The run timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27.

**Copies of the updated regulation booklet, 2012-2015 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound, can be found under the 'Regulations' heading at the following web address:**  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.salmon#/management>

**The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Wednesday, May 22.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.